



# M E D I A   R E L E A S E

STATE OF TENNESSEE  
DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH &  
DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
February 8, 2008

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## COPING WITH THE EFFECTS OF CRISIS AND TRAUMA

### *Mental Health Resources Available Across the State*

Nashville, TN - In the aftermath of the recent devastating tornadoes, many Tennesseans are finding their lives changed in ways they have never before experienced. After encountering such trauma, many people feel that their safe, routine lives are now suddenly dangerous and unpredictable.

Trauma can lead to any number of emotional, behavioral and physical responses that may include feelings of anger, sadness, grief, guilt, or anxiety over lost people or property; problems with sleeping or eating; substance use; or symptoms such as headaches, numbness, and nausea. These are normal responses for persons who experience a traumatic event and can be addressed in healthy ways.

"It is important for everyone to know they are not alone in times like this and needed resources are available across the state," stated Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities Commissioner Virginia Trotter Betts. "Tennessee has been rocked by the horrendous events of Mother Nature. Thus it is especially important that each of us is made aware of ways to deal with the effects of these events and how to accept and offer appropriate assistance."

You can help yourself and others cope with these responses in a variety of ways:

**DO:** talk about your experience, allow others to help, get adequate rest, eat healthy meals, try to maintain a routine, take breaks from cleanup, keep a journal, or participate in a support group.

**DON'T:** use alcohol or drugs to cope with negative feelings, work too much or stop taking care of yourself, blame others, or withdraw from family and friends.

In most instances, just following this simple advice can help ease the symptoms of acute stress disorder and prevent more serious problems like Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.

For a list of mental health resources or crisis services in your area visit [www.state.tn.us/mental](http://www.state.tn.us/mental) or call (615) 253-4812.

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